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Two months to the day have now elapsed since this year's Director and his family took over the stately mansion on Saladin road. The School was quiet in early September, after a summer of intense activity during which Paul and Nancy Lapp managed to run things in Jerusalem as well as to participate in the work at Shechem. One of the Fellows, Herbert Huffman, was already here with his wife, and had spent the summer being initiated into the mysteries of Archaeology. Prof. and Mrs. Sellers were also here, people whose charm we were rapidly to appreciate and whose knowledge of Jerusalem and its people made the Director and his wife soon feel at home in local society. Prof. Kelso was in the hospital after a heart attack, but doing quite well; and Mrs. Kelso, who was staying at the School, often found time to help with her long experience in School affairs. Mr. Lee Ellenberger, the Shechem photographer, and Mr. Gustav Materna, the el-Jib draftsman, were still at work at the School, and, together with an amazingly crowded basement, symbolized the activities of the summer.

During September and October the residents for the year arrived. First came James Zink, the second Fellow, and his wife, who soon found herself teaching mathematics and chemistry at Bir Zeit College; then Prof. and Mrs. Dwight Stevenson, and finally Prof. and Mrs. George Frey. In addition, a number of visitors came as usual: Prof. and Mrs. Leslie Dunstan, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Kinsey, Dr. Richard Ettinghausen, Prof. Ihor Sevcenko. Prof. and Mrs. Alfred Sauer and two of their children settled in a house halfway up the Mount of Olives. Prof. Norman Gottwald and his family stopped for a while at the National Hotel.

The staff of the School was all there, the hard core the same as seven years ago but somewhat older. No less efficient, they rose to the occasion--which has come to be like a tribal rite--of the great opening tea. It was well attended, although not so well as in the preceding year, and it was good to renew acquaintance with many old friends of the School.

A number of trips were undertaken by members of the School. The desert palaces and Khirbat al-Mafjar were revisited, as well as Bethlehem. On the occasion of a visit from Miss Kenyon, we all went to examine Père de Vaux' excavations at Tell Farah; and it was sheer joy even for those who are not competent in ancient archaeology to see Père de Vaux and Miss Kenyon bent over some recently uncovered section arguing the dates of walls and levels. Père de Vaux' results have been spectacular and were widely publicized by the press and radio as revealing for the first time in Palestine a gate complex of the magnitude of the one at Byblos. The visit to Tell Farah was followed by a guided tour of Shechem under the leadership of Prof. Sellers, which was unfortunately cut short by falling darkness.

Paul Lapp and Herb Huffman joined the staff of the British Expedition to Petra, where they spent three weeks. Two carloads of School members, with Awni Dajani, went down to pick them up and spent a long day in this most extraordinary site. The excavations are still continuing, and I expect that a short report will be appended to the next Newsletter. There is no need to describe either Petra's monuments or the peculiar psychological puzzle of a city where the dead fared spectacularly better than the living; but one may mention that the School spirit asserted itself in the muscle-breaking energy with which the members of the expedition, scornful of guides, took the wrong wadi to climb to the High Place and then compounded their troubles by insisting, despite numerous false starts, on reaching the top over the ridges. And, in the afternoon, a climb to the Deir was but the last proof of our collective stamina. On the way down to Petra we had stopped at Madaba and Qustal, the latter rarely visited although on the main road, and probably an early Islamic site rather than a Roman one. On the way back, we spent an hour looking at the early Roman camp at Odruh and at the Crusaders' castle of Shaubak.

The last of the local activities worth mentioning has been a series of visits to the Haram area, during one of which the Director had an opportunity to climb on top of the Dome, even to walk inside the two domes--a frightening but most rewarding experience, about which more will be said in a subsequent letter.

The great event of these past two months was the School trip. And, before proceeding to describe it, I should like to put in an extra word of belated thanks to Dr. Mullenburg, Director of the School when I was a Fellow seven years ago. I had not realized the complication of organizing such a trip. Forty-seven letters, two trips to Amman, six long distance telephone calls, thirteen telegrams, eighteen photographs, the help of U.S. Consular officials in Syria, and the intervention of the Rector of the University of Ankara--a personal friend of the Director--were needed to arrange the trip, which ended, as will be seen, in a dramatic fiasco.

On the 12th of October, the Director, the Annual Professor, the two Fellows, and Prof. Ihor Sevcenko, a Byzantinist from Columbia attached to the Michigan-Princeton Sinai expedition, and the driver Hamed, known to many School visitors, left Jerusalem and reached Damascus with no difficulty. The permits for the eastern regions were ready, and after a day of courtesy calls and a visit to the Museum, we all left for Palmyra, where we spent two days, and thence to Deiraz-Zor. From Dier az-Zor we radiated to Rahbah, Dura-Europos, and Mari; and we also went to Zelebiya on the left bank of the Euphrates.-- Recrossing the Euphrates we proceeded to Buseirah (ancient Circesium) and then went north along the Khabur, visiting as many tells as we could take in one day. Eventually we reached Hasseke, where we spent the night. The following day, we examined Tell Brak, Chaghar Bazar, and a number of intermediary places, went some way towards Ras al-Ain, but turned back because of the bad state of the road after having studied a few sites. We returned by night to Dier az-Zor, having once lost our way between the unfinished new road and the telegraph poles. We were greeted at the Euphrates by one of the most spectacular exhibitions of fireworks ever seen by any of us. It was not,

however, in our honor; it turned out to be Syrian Army Day. The following day we came to Aleppo with a couple of stops on the way.

In the meantime, Prof. Sevchenko, who had not received his Jazirah permits on time, had gone to Aleppo and, following up early leads, started through Turkish officialdom in Jerusalem, had secured permits<sup>for us</sup> to visit Diyarbakir, Mardin, Nisibis, Van, Malatya, and other points in eastern Turkey. We were all ready to go when Huffmon became ill with a fever of 102. After fear that it might be malaria, the doctor settled for gastro-enteritis; and we stayed two days taking care of him and travelling around Aleppo. The Turkish trip had to be cancelled because of the delay. Having arranged for Huffmon's return to Jerusalem, we started for Turkey anyway, intending to spend some time around Kayseri, Kultepe, Boghazkoy, and the Cappadocian churches. We spent a day at Antioch and were fully impressed not only by the site but by the most "un-Near-Eastern" character of Daphni. How easy it became to explain the peculiar fascination this gorge with its waterfalls, luxuriant vegetation, and wasted water held for the Hellenistic world. At night we drove on to Adana and there, the next morning, the Director woke up with a fever close to 105 and was admitted as an "emergency civilian" at the U.S. Air Force base hospital. It turned out to be a simple intestinal flu. The rest of the School spent two days visiting sites in the Adana area and then, having organized the shipping of the Director by air to Jerusalem, started themselves by car. Thus a great opportunity was lost through human frailty, but it is hoped that the trip planned for the spring may cover some of the ground missed in the fall.

Such then is the account of the trip. It covered much in Syria, but, except for Antioch and the Adana area, little in Turkey. A great deal of pottery was collected, which will now be sorted, cleaned, and marked for the School collection. Much was photographed, and all are awaiting the results of their essays. But one of the more rewarding parts of the trip is so far unmentioned: the conversations which took place in the car. At times of course, especially in the evening, a gloomy silence pervaded as bodies were thrown back and forth on desert roads. At other times the U.S. elections or the local conditions were analyzed. But in a number of instances the combination of three ancient historians, one Byzantinist, and one Islamicist led to stimulating observations and hypotheses about things seen. It is not possible to summarize them all here, but I should like to mention two of the themes which appeared to us particularly interesting, and to which we hope to return in School discussions during the year.

The first problem is that of the Euphrates and Khabur valleys. Over the centuries, they were sometimes centers of major cultures, sometimes passage ways culturally dependent on influences from the south-east or the northwest as the case may be, or sometimes frontier areas separating large empires. In each instance the aspect of the towns, their architecture, their social and religious character varied; it would be interesting to add new examples to the already known ones of Mari and Dura-Europos. We were struck by the differences between the sites along the Khabur below Hasseke (situated at regular intervals with Islamic and Byzantine pottery predominating--Byzantine frontier towns, Islamic caravan stops) and those in the Jaghjagh area (thousands of them, all earlier than the second half of the second millen-



ium B.C.), or on the upper Khabur (closer it seems to those of the lower Khabur). How can one define the differences which occurred in the area between the times, say Persian or Islamic, when they were in the midst of an empire, and those, Roman or Byzantine, when they were frontiers? What were the predominant influences in each of these periods, and why?

The second problem is that of the "dead cities" of Syria, especially northern Syria. The problem here is that, in most instances, these cities and villages developed in places which had not been occupied before--differing in this respect from similar places in Jordan. They are, therefore, a specific phenomenon, starting around the third century A.D., declining after the Persian invasion of 610, and disappearing after the middle of the eighth century. What led to the growth of these cities and villages? Movements of population, for which we lack documentary support? Olive and wine growing for the large cities of Anatolia, as was recently suggested? Catering to the many pilgrimage centers or pilgrim routes which developed after the Christianization of the area? All of these? Such are a few of the questions tossed around in the car, questions for which answers should be provided by eventual excavations. Even if we gave no answers, we did raise questions of interest to the history of the Near East; and thus, with its misfortunes, the trip accomplished a number of useful purposes.

And now we are back. Rains began yesterday, to everyone's joy, since such an early start augurs well for the winter and may mean the end of the three-year drought. Hibernation begins, a hibernation which we hope to make a profitable one. We are planning a series of evening seminars on research subjects and hope in the next few months to accomplish many of the things for which we came here. About these and about our individual and collective plans more will be said in the next Newsletter.

As an appendix, I should like to add a statement by Prof. A. Kuschke about the subjects on which he and his colleagues worked during the summer:

- 1.) Prof. Dr. Georg Fohrer, University of Wien: The Ammonite frontier fortresses south and southeast of Na'ur.
- 2.) Prof. Dr. G. Wallis, University of Halle: The Ephraimite-Manassite frontier between Michmethah and Naarath (Josh. 16:6f.).
- 3.) Privatdozent Dr. Donner, University of Göttingen: Explorations in the area between 'Anata and Rammun, to gather material for a new understanding Isa. 10:27-34 (Herr Donner will show that this Isaiah passage belongs not to the time of the later Assyrian wars, but to the time of the Syro-Ephraimite war.
- 4.) Assistant Dr. K. Schunck, University of Greifswald: Towards the location of some Benjaminite cities.

- 5.) Assistant Dr. W. Schmidt: Surface explorations in Wadi Na'ur and the upper Wadi Kefren in relation to the problem of the location of Ja'zer.
- 6.) I myself will soon undertake an attempt to locate Bosra/Bāsār (Dtr. 4:43, Josh. 20:8, Jer. 48:24 and Mesha Stele 27), Kirjathaim (Jer. 48:24; Mesha Stele 10), and Beth Diblataim (Jer. 48:22; Mesha Stele 30).

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